

JOSH STEIN
ATTORNEY GENERAL



TRACY NAYER
ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL
CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION
TNAYER@NCDOJ.GOV

January 29, 2021

Dexter Goei, CEO
Altice USA, Inc.
One Court Square
Long Island City, New York 11101
Sent by email and Federal Express

Re: North Carolina Department of Justice Complaints against Suddenlink

Dear Mr. Goei:

The Consumer Protection Division of the North Carolina Department of Justice has received a number of complaints concerning high-speed internet service issues with Suddenlink. These complaints include letters filed by the North Carolina mayors, aldermen, and/or commissioners of the Towns of Ayden, Scotland Neck, Tarboro, and Winterville, the Cities of New Bern, Rocky Mount, and Washington, and Craven County, who filed such letters on behalf of their constituents who subscribe to Suddenlink. Copies of these letters are attached for your reference. The affected consumers allege that, among other things, they are unable to regularly or reliably access the internet through Suddenlink's network at the internet speeds promised, and sometimes are unable to access the internet at all.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for consumers to have access to reliable internet services in their daily lives. Now more than ever, these services are critical to maintaining familial connections, educating our children, and working to provide for our families. When a consumer is unable to regularly or reliably access the internet, it can be more than a nuisance or inconvenience, and can have a real impact on their ability to meet the needs and obligations of their everyday lives.

The North Carolina Department of Justice is authorized by statute to investigate unfair and/or deceptive business practices in or affecting commerce in North Carolina, and to take appropriate legal action to remedy such practices. *See* N.C.G.S. §§ 75-1.1 *et seq.*

Based on concerns raised by North Carolina consumers regarding Suddenlink, we request an urgent meeting to discuss these matters. Prior to the meeting, please review your records to identify complaints that Suddenlink has received from consumers in North Carolina concerning issues similar to those raised in the attached letters. We would like to discuss the volume and general nature of these complaints, and the steps Suddenlink has taken to address those complaints.

We are also interested in hearing about the age and condition of the equipment and infrastructure that serves these towns and cities, and the steps Suddenlink is taking to actively monitor and address capacity issues on its network.

Please ensure that a person who can communicate with our office about these concerns responds to me via email at tnayer@ncdoj.gov within seven (7) days of the date of this letter, so that we can coordinate a mutually agreeable time to meet in the near future to discuss these issues. We are willing to conduct this meeting by video conference to ensure the safety and convenience of all attendees.

Thank you in advance for your immediate attention to this matter. We look forward to receiving your response on or before Friday, February 5, 2021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracy Nayer", is centered below the word "Sincerely,". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Tracy Nayer
Assistant Attorney General

Enclosures

TOWN OF AYDEN, NC
INCORPORATED 1891



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
4144 WEST AVENUE
AYDEN, NC 28513

January 12, 2021

JAN 25 2021

Josh Stein, North Carolina Attorney General
North Carolina Department of Justice
9001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-9001

RE: Complaint Regarding Internet Service Provider – Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA

Dear Mr. Stein:

The purpose of this letter is to request that the North Carolina Attorney General's Office initiate an investigation into the business practices of Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA. The Town of Ayden receives constant complaints regarding poor service from this provider. Customers report to Town Officials a broad range of issues concerning Suddenlink, including: escalating costs, lack of access to service, excessively long outages, poor communications and response to outages, failure to keep equipment in good working condition, temporary fixes resulting in unburied/low hanging lines for extended periods of time, internet speeds substantially slower than advertised, etc.

While service issue complaints have been ongoing for several years, the COVID-19 Pandemic has exposed the scope of problems with both physical infrastructure and service delivery of Suddenlink Communications. At a moment of stay-at-home orders, remote learning and teleworking, Ayden citizens are frequently denied access to information, education and jobs. The Town seeks any assistance that your office can provide to improve this vital utility within our service area. For some time, Town Officials have directed citizens to make any issues with Suddenlink known to your office. Town Officials will continue this practice so that the North Carolina Department of Justice may document the persistent and extensive service delivery issues with this company.

Thank you for your attention to this matter., Please contact me at 252-814-0317 or Matthew Livingston, Town Manager at 252-481-5819 with additional questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



Stephen W. Tripp
Mayor

CC: Town of Ayden Governing Board
Matthew Livingston, Town Manager
Scott Dixon, Town Attorney

"ONE OF AMERICA'S BEST SMALL COMMUNITIES TO RAISE A FAMILY" ~ U.S. MEDIA GROUP, 2013

P.O. BOX 219 | AYDEN, NORTH CAROLINA 28513-0219 | TELEPHONE (252) 481-5826

Board of Commissioners
Jason R. Jones, Chairman
Denny Bucher, Vice Chairman
George S. Liner
Thomas F. Mark
Theron L. McCabe
Ettienne "E.T." Mitchell
Beatrice R. Smith

Administrative Staff

Jack B. Veit, III, County Manager
Gene Hodges, Assistant County Manager
Nan E. Holton, Clerk to the Board
Amber M. Parker, Human Resources Director
Craig Warren, Finance Director



Administration Building
406 Craven Street
New Bern, NC 28560
Fax 252-637-0526
manager@cravencountync.gov

Commissioners 252-636-6601
Manager 252-636-6600
Finance 252-636-6603
Human Resources 252-636-6602



January 19, 2021

Josh Stein, North Carolina Attorney General
North Carolina Department of Justice
9001 Mail Services Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-9001

Re: Complaint Regarding Internet Service Provider – Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA

Dear Mr. Stein:

The purpose of this letter is to request that the North Carolina Attorney General's Office initiate an investigation into the business practices of Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA. The Craven County Board of Commissioners receive constant complaints regarding poor service from this provider. Customers report to County Commissioners a broad range of issues concerning Suddenlink, including: escalating costs, lack of access to service, excessively long outages, poor communications and response to outages, failure to keep equipment in good working condition, no local office or ability to speak to a person, temporary fixes resulting in unburied/low hanging lines for extended periods of time, internet speeds substantially slower than advertised, etc.

While service issue complaints have been ongoing for several years, the COVID-19 Pandemic has exposed the scope of problems with both the physical infrastructure and service delivery of Suddenlink Communications. At a moment of stay-at-home orders, remote learning and teleworking, Craven County residents are frequently denied access to information, education and jobs. The County seeks any assistance that your office can provide to improve this vital utility within our service area. For some time, Craven County Commissioners have directed residents to make any issues with Suddenlink known to your office. County officials will continue this practice so that the North Carolina Department of Justice may document the persistent and extensive service delivery issues with this company.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please contact Craven County Manager Jack Veit at 252-636-6600 or myself at 252-229-1085 with additional questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Jones".

Jason Jones
Chairman, Craven County Board of Commissioners

CC: Jack Veit, County Manager
Arey Grady, County Attorney
Senator Norm Sanderson
Representative Steve Tyson

Aldermen

Sabrina Bengel
Jameesha Harris
Robert V. Aster
Johnnie Ray Kinsey
Barbara J. Best
Jeffrey T. Odham

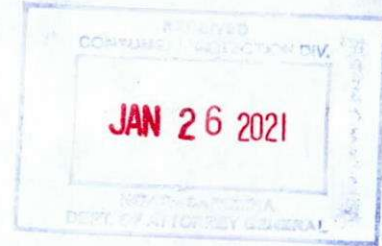


300 Pollock Street, P.O. Box 1129
New Bern, NC 28563-1129
(252) 636-4000

Dana E. Outlaw
Mayor
Mark A. Stephens
City Manager
Brenda E. Blanco
City Clerk
Mary M. Hogan
Director of Finance

CERTIFIED MAIL

January 12, 2021



Josh Stein, NC Attorney General
NC Department of Justice
9001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-9001

RE: Complaint Regarding Internet/Media/Communications Service Provider –
Suddenlink Communications/ Altice USA

Dear Mr. Stein:

Over the last few years, the City of New Bern has received constant, sometimes daily complaints regarding poor service from Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA. The complaints are only escalating. Customers have reported to the City a broad range of issues that include: lack of access to service, failure to complete installations, excessively long outages, poor communication and response to customer inquiries, unresolved issues with billing errors, poor response to outages, failure to keep equipment in good working condition, temporary fixes resulting in unbundled or low-hanging lines for extended periods (in some cases, more than 12 months), etc. This letter is written to request that the NC Attorney General's Office initiate an investigation into the business practices of Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA.

With more people working and learning remotely due to COVID-19, the scope of problems with the physical infrastructure, service, and level of customer service has been greatly illuminated. In a time of stay-at-home orders when people are teleworking and our children are learning remotely, New Bern's citizens are frequently denied access to information, education, and the ability to perform their jobs. We have communicated and met with upper management of Suddenlink/Altice on more than one occasion to express concern and frustration over these issues. This has yielded no results. As elected officials of the City of New Bern, we are seeking your support and any assistance that your office can provide.

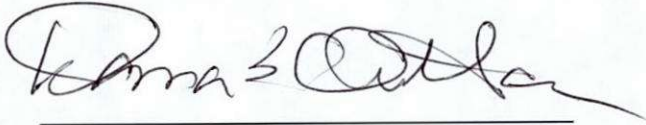
Josh Stein, NC Attorney General

Page 2

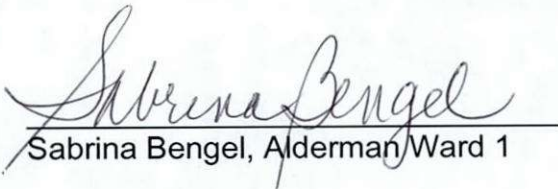
January 12, 2021

If you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Mayor Dana Outlaw at 252-649-4137 or Mark Stephens, City Manager, at 252-639-2700.

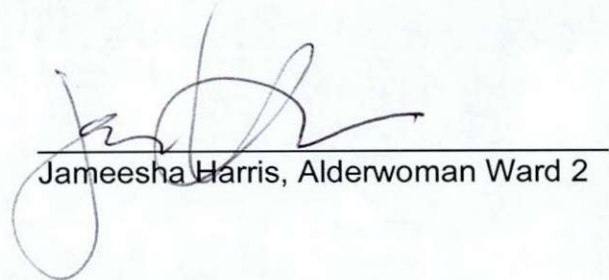
Respectfully,



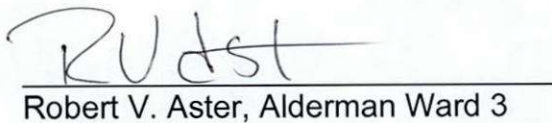
Dana E. Outlaw, Mayor



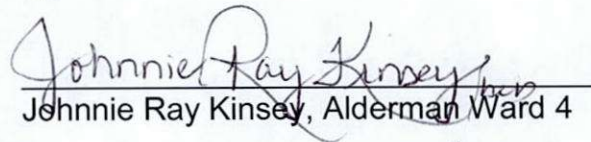
Sabrina Bengel, Alderman Ward 1



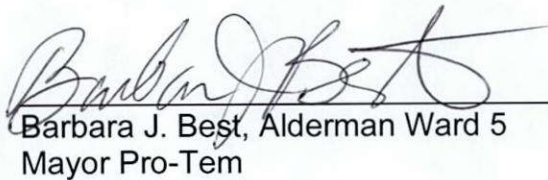
Jameesha Harris, Alderwoman Ward 2



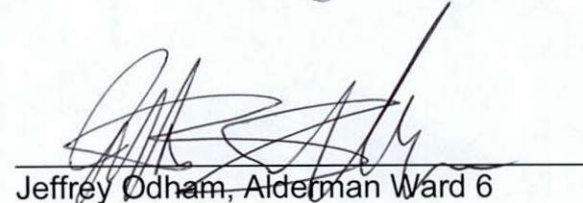
Robert V. Aster, Alderman Ward 3



Johnnie Ray Kinsey, Alderman Ward 4



Barbara J. Best, Alderman Ward 5
Mayor Pro-Tem

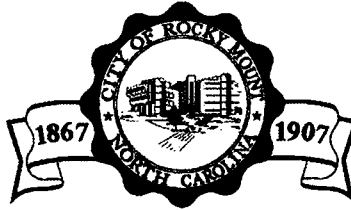


Jeffrey Odham, Alderman Ward 6

/beb

cc: Erin Jones, Director Government Affairs, Altice USA

JAN 28 2021



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

January 19, 2021

Josh Stein, NC Attorney General
NC Department of Justice
9001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-9001

RE: Suddenlink/Altice USA Complaints

Dear Attorney General Stein:

We receive numerous complaints about Suddenlink; their poor service, high pricing, inadequate picture quality, poor communications, incorrect billing, missed service calls, unburied cables, slow internet speed, length of time customers are waiting on the phone, faulty equipment, and general lack of caring about their product or their customers. Many of us feel that this is due to the monopoly they hold in this area.

This has been an on-going problem that has increased due to more people at home and online during this pandemic. Unlike all of us, Suddenlink has not evolved to meet the demand, nor shown any compassion toward their customers. Complaints are at an all-time high and we need help from your office to investigate the business practices of Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA.

I also urge you to provide counsel and direction on how to best introduce competition into the marketplace so that cable companies will need to offer the best services, best price, and best customer service in their efforts to gain, and keep, customers.

I appreciate your consideration and attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me at 252-314-3503 with any questions.

Sincerely,

C. Saunders Roberson, Mayor
City of Rocky Mount

cc. Governor Roy Cooper
NC State Senator Lisa Barnes
NC State Senator Toby Fitch
NC State Senator Shelly Willingham
NC State Representative James Gailliard
NC State Representative Matthew Winslow



JAN 26 2021

CERTIFIED MAIL

TOWN OF SCOTLAND NECK

January 20, 2021

P.O. Box 537
1310 MAIN STREET
SCOTLAND NECK, NC 27874

Josh Stein, North Carolina Attorney General
North Carolina Department of Justice
9001 Main Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-9001

RE: Complaint Regarding Internet Service Provider – Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA

Dear Mr. Stein:

On behalf of the citizens of Scotland Neck who are Suddenlink customers, I am requesting that the North Carolina Attorney General's Office initiate an investigation into the business practices of Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA. The Town of Scotland Neck receives constant complaints regarding poor service and little to no communication in resolving the issues from this provider. Complaints range from escalating costs, lack of access to service, excessively long outages, poor communication and response to outages, failure to keep equipment in good working condition, temporary fixes resulting in unburied or low hanging lines for extended periods of time, internet speeds substantially slower than advertised, just to name a few.

While service issue complaints have been ongoing for a long time, the COVID-19 Pandemic has revealed the scope of problems with both the physical infrastructure and service delivery of Suddenlink Communications. With the stay-at-home orders, remote learning, and teleworking, Scotland Neck citizens are recurrently denied access to information, education, and jobs. I am seeking any assistance your office can provide to improve this vital utility within our service area. Town Officials have directed citizens to make any complaints with Suddenlink known to your office. Town Officials will continue this practice so that the North Carolina Department of Justice may document the persistent and extensive service delivery issues with this company.

Thank you for any assistance you may provide. Please contact me at (252) 826-3152 or ebraxton@townofscotlandneck.com should you have any questions regarding this matter.

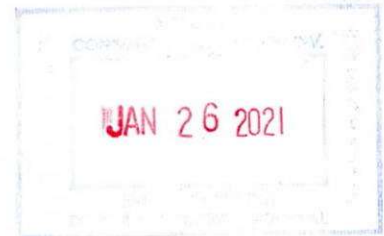
Sincerely,

Eddie Braxton
Mayor



Town of Tarboro

500 N Main Street, PO Box 220, Tarboro, NC 27886 (P) 252.641.4200 (F) 252.641.4286



CERTIFIED MAIL

December 30, 2020

Josh Stein, North Carolina Attorney General
North Carolina Department of Justice
9001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-9001

Re: Complaint Regarding Internet Service Provider – Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA

Dear Mr. Stein:

The purpose of this letter is to request that the North Carolina Attorney General's Office initiate an investigation into the business practices of Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA. The Town of Tarboro receives constant complaints regarding poor service from this provider. Customers report to Town Officials a broad range of issues concerning Suddenlink, including: escalating costs, lack of access to service, excessively long outages, poor communication/response to outages, failure to keep equipment in good working condition, temporary fixes resulting in unburied/low hanging lines for extended periods of time, internet speeds substantially slower than advertised, etc.

While service issue complaints have been ongoing for several years, the COVID-19 Pandemic has exposed the scope of problems with both the physical infrastructure and service delivery of Suddenlink Communications. At a moment of stay-at-home orders, remote learning, and teleworking, Tarboro citizens are frequently denied access to information, education, and jobs. The Town seeks any assistance that your office can provide to improve this vital utility within our service area. For some time, Town Officials have directed citizens to make any issues with Suddenlink known to your office. Town Officials will continue this practice so that the North Carolina Department of Justice may document the persistent and extensive service delivery issues with this company.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please contact me at (252) 883-2972 or Troy Lewis, Town Manager at (252) 641-4250 with additional questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Joseph W. Pitt
Mayor

Cc: Tarboro Town Council
Troy Lewis, Town Manager
Chad Hinton, Town Attorney

Mayor
Donald R. Sadler

City Manager
Jonathan Russell



Washington City Council
Richard Brooks
Virginia Finnerty
Elizabeth A. Kane
William Pitt
Mike Renn

January 4, 2021

Josh Stein, North Carolina Attorney General
North Carolina Department of Justice
9001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-9001

Re: Complaint Regarding Internet Service Provider – Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA

Dear Mr. Stein:

The purpose of this letter is to request that the North Carolina Attorney General's Office initiate an investigation into the business practices of Suddenlink Communications/Altice USA. The City of Washington receives constant complaints regarding poor service from this provider. Customers report to City Officials a broad range of issues concerning Suddenlink, including: escalating costs, lack of access to service, excessively long outages, poor communications and response to outages, failure to keep equipment in good working condition, temporary fixes resulting in unburied/low hanging lines for extended periods of time, internet speeds substantially slower than advertised, etc.

While service issue complaints have been ongoing for several years, the COVID-19 Pandemic has exposed the scope of problems with both the physical infrastructure and service delivery of Suddenlink Communications. At a moment of stay-at-home orders, remote learning and teleworking, Washington citizens are frequently denied access to information, education and jobs. The City seeks any assistance that your office can provide to improve this vital utility within our service area. For some time, City Officials have directed citizens to make any issues with Suddenlink known to your office. City Officials will continue this practice so that the North Carolina Department of Justice may document the persistent and extensive service delivery issues with this company.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please contact me at 252-975-3208 or Jonathan Russell, City Manager at 252-975-9319 with additional questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald R. Sadler".

Donald R. Sadler
Mayor

Cc: Washington City Council
Jonathan Russell, City Manager
Franz Holscher, City Attorney



JAN 28 2021

2571 Railroad Street
PO Box 1459
Winterville, NC 28590

Phone: (252) 756-2221
Fax: (252) 321-8455
www.wintervillenc.com

CERTIFIED MAIL

January 12, 2021

Josh Stein, North Carolina Attorney General
North Carolina Department of Justice
9001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-9001

**Re: Complaint Regarding Internet Service Provider – Suddenlink Communications/Altec USA
(Suddenlink)**

Dear Mr. Stein:

The purpose of this letter is to join some of our fellow cities and towns in eastern North Carolina and request that the North Carolina Attorney General's Office initiate an investigation into the business practices of Suddenlink Communications/Altec USA (hereinafter referred to as Suddenlink). The Town of Winterville receives constant complaints regarding poor service and unfair business practices from this Provider. These complaints against Suddenlink include, but are not limited to escalating costs; excessively long and frequent outages; poor communication/response to said outages; failure to keep equipment in good working condition; "temporary" fixes resulting in exposed/low-hanging lines for extended periods of time; very slow internet speeds (lower than advertised or sold); poor customer service practices; and lack of availability to service.

While many of these complaints span a multi-year period, the COVID-19 Pandemic has exposed the broad scope of the problems with both physical infrastructure and service delivery of Suddenlink. The combination of Stay-at-Home orders, remote learning, and teleworking requirements during the Pandemic has brought about a larger-scale reliance on internet service and specifically Suddenlink. Due to the continuing problems which Suddenlink has failed to address, Winterville citizens are frequently denied access to required information, remote education, and teleworking requirements. The Town seeks any assistance that your Office can provide to "force" improvement of this vital utility within our service area. For some time, Town Officials have directed citizens to report issues with Suddenlink known to your office. Town Officials will continue this practice so that the North Carolina Department of Justice may document the persistent and extensive service delivery issues with this Company.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. Please contact me at (252) 215-2344 or Terri L. Parker, Town Manager at (252) 215-2341 with additional questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely, 

Douglas A. Jackson
Mayor

Cc: Winterville Town Council
Terri L. Parker, Town Manager
Keen Lassiter, Town Attorney